The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Thru Payroll Savings

WHOLE NO. 1809 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1945 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 35, NO. 50

LABOR, USA

Washington, D. C.—The twenty-third edition of the American Federationist of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, included the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news:

Cooling Off

By JOSEPH A. PADWAY
Chief Counsel for the AFL

President Truman's new proposals for the settlement of labor disputes by fact-finding boards involving certain compulsory cooling-off periods are now before Congress. The American Federation of Labor does not agree with the President's plan but it believes he is completely sincere and well meaning in proposing it.

Nevertheless, the plan embodies some obvious faults and some even more dangerous implications.

To begin with, a similar suggestion was considered and rejected only a week ago by the Labor-Management Conference because the delegates felt it would not work.

After all, the best way to obtain peaceful industrial relations is for labor and management to get together and settle their own problems through genuine collective bargaining and, if necessary, voluntary arbitration. The moment compulsion or outside intervention is introduced, collective bargaining flies out the window. We believe the President's plan does not offer sufficient encouragement to genuine collective bargaining and voluntary arbitration. In our opinion, there is not a single dispute existing in American industrial life today which could not be settled promptly by the sincere application of these methods.

The right to strike is definitely impaired by the President's bill. Although the compulsory cooling-off period is supposed to last only 30 days, it constitutes just as serious a limitation of American liberties as would a 30-day suspension of the right of free speech or a free press.

Of course, the bill expressly upholds the right of any individual worker to quit his job at any time he sees fit. But if two or more workers decide to quit in violation of the terms of the proposed plan, that would be unlawful. It would subject such workers to charges of conspiracy and would revive court injunctions against union activities. We thought this abuse was buried for all time when the Norris-LaGuardia Act was passed many years ago, but now it is rising from the grave to haunt and harass organized labor again.

Another danger is that the President's proposal may open the door to even more drastic legislation. Anti-labor groups in Congress already are sharpening their knives for us.

The American Federation of Labor believes there is plenty of room for improvement in relations between labor and industry but it will never approve methods which will result in the scalping of the rights and interests of American workers.

Safety First

By NED H. DEARBORN
President of the National Safety Council

It is high time for all Americans to face realistically a blunt and shocking fact. Accidents now imperil the life and limb of more Americans than any war in history. Accidents will cause more deaths in the forthcoming year than any of a long list of deadly diseases, including tuberculosis and infantile paralysis. Unless proper preventive measures are promptly applied on a nation-wide scale, here are the frightful figures we must contemplate in the next 12 months:

1. One of every 14 Americans injured by an accident.
2. In round numbers, 100,000 Americans killed in accidents.
3. Three hundred fifty thousand Americans permanently crippled by accidents.
4. An needless loss to our national economy—to our purchasing power and national income—of 5 billion dollars caused by the waste of accidents.

I don't want to give any impression of "scare talk." I mention these facts because we must face them and we must do something about them. My appeal is to the down-to-earth common sense of every person who hears these words.

This terrible squandering of lives and woeful waste of money is as completely unnecessary as it is utterly tragic. Accidents don't just happen. Accidents are caused. Accidents can be prevented. In fact, we know enough about preventing accidents to cut the enormous accident toll to the vanishing point. But the tragic truth remains that our knowledge is not adequately applied.

So we are confronted with a situation which can only be described with one word: National emergency.

Labor can and has done much to help prevent accidents. For example, labor has long recognized that safety is essential safety. Unions are properly concerned with the safety of their members. And labor can do even more by helping to educate its members in safe practices not only in factories but at home and on the highways, on the job and at play.

It seems very clear to me that even in this unsettled reconversion period there is certainly one area in which management and labor can reach complete agreement. That area is in the field of safety. Management and labor can and often do coordinate their efforts to promote safety in industrial plants. Within the past few years those plants that have set safety programs into practice have reduced accidents by more than half. In many industries, labor-management cooperation has been a keystone of these safety programs.

Management and labor also can and should coordinate their plans and efforts to support the safety movement in their communities and curtail the needless waste of lives, time and money resulting from accidents away from work as well as on the job.

We of the National Safety Council are acutely aware that we must have the cooperation of labor, of management, of every element of our national life, if the nation is to be freed from the scourge of accidents. And I know that labor will continue to do all it can during this critical period of reconversion and expansion to free American workers from the pain, the expense and the tragedy which are the inevitable price of accidents.

Junior Union

By ANNABEL LEE GLENN
Junior Union Editor of American Federationist

This is the time of year when children get first consideration in America. The Christmas season is their special season. This year, American children should enjoy a really merry Christmas because they have earned it.

During the war the boys and girls of our country showed their patriotism by action. The way they worked in the important conservation drives, their purchases of War Stamps and Bonds and their eagerness to help in various civic and community activities deserves a big hand.

We in the American Federation of Labor particularly appreciate the response of young people to the appeals for scrap metals and fibers. For years we have tried to stimulate their interest in serious matters through the Junior Union section of the American Federationist.

You'd be surprised to know the intelligent and cooperative attitude shown by the children of trade union members in every effort to improve their home life, their communities and our country as a whole.

They realize that when a trade unionist asks for higher wages, when he demands safety regulations at his place of work, or joins with his fellow workingmen for any other reforms, his motives are not entirely selfish. He is also trying to protect his family and the families of all other workers.

In trade union circumstances a wage-earning family has first place, and his ability to save for those dependent upon him has been one of the guiding principles behind every move for social and industrial advancement.

Because the American Federation of Labor has developed the responsibility toward the young people we have had constant improvement in our child labor laws and school attendance records. Most of the sick and out of work benefits and other social security measures have been brought about by the unremitting efforts of trade union men and women in their desire to provide a high standard of living and education, of safety and well-being for their children.

Above all, trade unionists teach their boys and girls that American freedom and democracy is their greatest heritage.

TENANTS SUE O'DANIEL TO HALT EVICTIONS

Washington, D. C.—Senator "Pappy" O'Daniel of Texas, the avowed enemy of organized labor, who has accumulated enough wealth to buy a palatial apartment building in the nation's capital, is having a hard time evicting some of the tenants.

Located back of the Supreme Court, the building has 14 one-bedroom apartments, but O'Daniel and his family needs the entire building as a "dwelling." For himself and his family.

He ordered the tenants to move out last July. Eleven have since left, but accommodated enough wealthy to pay a three-figure rent in Washington's ten special landlord and tenant court against the eviction, declaring they have no other place to go to.

Meany Demands Showdown With Russia; Fights Anti-Labor Campaign Here

Harrisburg, Pa.—AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany called upon the American Government to lay its cards on the table with Soviet Russia and make it clear to them that "we do not want to see them scrawl over her the bomb as an act of national hypocrisy. We have nothing to gain by refusing to acknowledge the facts in regard to the lone-wolf foreign policy of Soviet Russia. Our government must resist firmly all attempts to set up a spheres of influence which ignore the democratic rights of the people affected. Only in this way can the United States make its full contribution to future world peace and play its full part in the new United Nations Organization."

"The American Federation of Labor wants the United Nations to be a united nations and not a jealous aggregation of powerful rivals. We are convinced that our country will gladly help to establish a United Nations of the world in which democratic liberties are assured and the free will of the people of each nation is given free opportunity for expression.

"A great many Americans are puzzled today about our country's relations with Russia and our attitude toward the communists. The great majority, I believe, is willing to wait to decide what the aims of the Soviets are and what our American program should be. There are many earnest citizens who believe that Russia is bent on the traditional aim of world revolution for communism or on a frankly imperialistic nationalism. Another and far smaller group assert that everyone is out of step except Russia and that any criticism of any Soviet aim is primi facie evidence of fascism."

Mr. Meany warned labor against being duped by Communist-front organizations in this country which use devious tricks to drum up support for Soviet policies and to undermine America's foreign policy.

"It must be clear to all," he said, "that there can be no compromise between real trade unionism and a political party which receives its orders from Moscow."

Organized labor's chief contribution to the cause of world peace, Mr. Meany concluded, is "to see to it that we remain free here at home." Unless freedom of individual labor is maintained in America, he insisted, "there is not much that we will be able to do for those in other parts of the world who are crying out against oppression and dictatorial control."

Executive Council Assails Three Dangerous Measures

AFL Opens All-Out Drive For Housing Legislation

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor opened an all-out campaign before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee for prompt adoption of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft Housing Bill.

Meeting witnesses at the opening of public hearings were AFL President William Green and Vice President Harvey C. Bates, head of the Bricklayers Union and chairman of the AFL's Housing Committee.

Housing is the cure of the nation's postwar economy and will provide the very foundation of our standard of living in the next decade, Mr. Green told the committee.

He emphasized that passage of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill is indispensable to the assurance of full employment in the years to come.

"If we fail to launch a comprehensive attack on postwar housing, an attack against repetition of past failures, an attack toward a clearly-stated objective of a decent home for every family, we cannot escape large-scale unemployment and we cannot avoid another destructive and disastrous depression," Mr. Green declared.

War has brought the problem to a head, the AFL chief pointed out. Millions of families have been uprooted as a result of the war-time housing shortage in every major city and returning servicemen are unable to find homes.

"It is for Congress to decide now what is meant by 'as servicemen,'" Mr. Green continued. "Is it prepared to tell the returning serviceman that the inability to live in a good home is none of Congress' business and none of the business of us for whom they fought? Is that the answer to 3,000,000 veterans who are in the immediate need of establishing new homes and setting up new families? Will Congress give this answer to over 6,000,000 of the 12,000,000 veterans who will be in dire need of housing within a year?

"Nor will labor accept any temporary or makeshift program for the provision of housing to meet the immediate emergency as the real answer to the veterans' need for permanent homes. Stop-gap housing must be provided at once on a temporary basis, but we are now exerting pressure for dwelling accommodations. For that reason the Senate committee that the real solution is the long-term solution, the bold and comprehensive solution which S. 1592 provides. Housing will continue to be a perennial and urgent necessity not only for the families of veterans, for their children, for those for whom they fought—housing which is not makeshift, but durable, livable and within the reach of the incomes these families will earn.

"The need to answer the veterans' demand for housing is urgent and pressing. Let us make quick provision of needed temporary housing for the time being. But let us not fall into the error of stopping at a temporary solution for what is patently a permanent problem. As servicemen and servicewomen civilians they share in the need for housing with all other civilians. The homes they need are not for themselves alone, but also for their families, relatives and dependents. No homes they now ask for are homes which are adequate to serve them over many years. They are homes which would be good enough to bring up their children in.

"This demand for a large-scale housing program is the program in America's order of the day."

Mr. Bates told the Senate committee:

"Workers have a vital concern in housing as producers, as consumers and as citizens. It is the function and the duty of the AFL Housing Committee to place before Congress the views which are representative of the largest single group of Americans who have had the opportunity to consider and give democratic expression to their views and judgment on this matter so vital to them through the representative channels of the trade union movement.

"The general housing legislation now before you has the overwhelming support of the American Federation of Labor membership. Housing is today, and for the years to come will remain, an issue of paramount importance to every American family. The decision Congress is about to make with regard to long-term housing policy will vitally affect the very course of economic and political life of our nation. What Congress is about to do with regard to this legislation will be carefully watched and well noted by most families throughout the land. This is one issue on which the American people are prepared to make sure that the public interest is truly served by legislation and will become no sacrifice of the public interest to accommodate special interests.

"On behalf of millions of American wage earners, in place before the Congress of the United States their overwhelming and unequivocal mandate, I urge that this committee report and demand for prompt enactment of this legislation. I plead on behalf of millions of American citizens who long for and expect an early and determined action on this issue, a decision which will vitally affect the future welfare, job opportunities and security for the American people.

"Labor and friends of labor place the responsibility for America's postwar reconstruction where it properly belongs—they place it squarely upon the Congress which is now responsible to Congress here and now. For they know that on the legislative calendar of the postwar period of the United States Congress there is no legislation more pressing or deferred until after demobilization of the armed forces and until the completion of treaties and international commitments "and the outcome of efforts to insure world peace."

Physicians Forum, Challenging AMA, Backs Truman's Medical Care Bill

New York City—The Physicians Forum strongly endorsed establishment of a system to provide health and medical care to supply the medical needs of all Americans, thus taking issue with the American Medical Association.

The Physicians Forum is a national organization of doctors, all members of the American Medical Association, who are interested in the extension of good medical care to all the people. In a telegram to President Truman, Dr. Ernest P. Boas, chairman of the Physicians Forum, said:

"Our membership, composed largely of practicing physicians through out the country who belong to the American Medical Association, most warmly commend you for your able and comprehensive message to the Congress on the 'State of the Union' and for the telling presentation of the many unmet medical needs of the country, and have rightly placed the health and welfare of our citizens do not earn enough money to buy adequate medical care.

"We earnestly hope that the people of the country, through their Congress, will take immediate action to improve these conditions in accordance with your worthy proposal."

Metal Trades Seek Wage Hike

Colorado Springs, Col.—Wage boosts for the nation's shipbuilders to help them meet rising prices and the cost of living were demanded by AFL metal trades leaders here at the National Shipbuilding Conference.

Representatives of labor, management and government were in attendance at the meeting, which was held since 1942 when the National War Labor Board took over wage disputes reviews in the shipbuilding industry.

President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades Department said:

"We are going to ask this conference to restore to the shipyard workers the real wage he had in 1941."

Frey called on the government to live up to its pledge to allow wage increases if the cost of living went up. He pointed out that since April 1, 1941, shipyard workers, with the exception of those on the Gulf of Mexico, have received only a 7½ percent increase, declaring it was "extraordinary that labor has been as quiet under that condition as it has been."

OFFICE EMPLOYEES FACE TEST VOTE IN BANK

New York City—The American Federation of Labor's drive to organize bank workers will receive a major test when a vote is completed at the Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York, it was learned in efforts to whether an AFL unit shall represent them in collective bargaining.

The union—Local 29078 of the Office Employees International Union—is successful in the election it plans to hold, the company's employees hope to organize the rest of the city's banks, large and small.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT FOR RETAIL PROFITS

Washington, D. C.—Over 1,200 percent profit's the staggering increase in profits rolled up by department and specialty stores during 1944, compared with their average earning from 1936 to 1939, the Federal Reserve Trade Center Bowles revealed.

Bowles made public the figure during a House Small Business Committee hearing on price control. Aghast, Senator Allen J. Ellender (D-La.), Lay exclaimed:

"If that's true, then OPA has failed in its job."

Bowles' answer was that "we regulate prices, not profits."

RIGHT TO STRIKE 'SACRED,' DAVIS SAYS

New York City.—One of the nation's veterans in the field of labor relations — William H. Davis, former chairman of the National War Labor Board—has sounded an urgent warning against legislation designed to suppress strikes.

Addressing the Society for the Advancement of Management, Davis declared that "the right to strike is the only safeguard that cannot be removed by law."

"It is as fundamental as the first 10 amendments to the Constitution," he said. "It can only be diminished by agreements, unless substitute reason and persuasion for force."

REP. BIEMILLER BACKS LABOR STAND ON BILLS

Washington, D. C.—Rep. Andrew J. Biemiller, of Wisconsin, took up the cudgels for labor in an address before the House of Representatives during which he attacked anti-labor legislation.

The liberal Congressman particularly attacked the Connally-Smith act amendments which would penalize unions for strikes. He also assailed the Norton bill which would outlaw strikes during compulsory cooling-off periods.

AFL Hits Military Training Bill

Washington, D. C.—Organized labor took a firm stand against universal military training legislation.

Heading a group of union spokesmen called to testify before on the proposal, Lewis G. Hines, legislative representative of the American Federation of Labor, asked the House Military Committee:

"May we in all fairness ask, preparedness for what? If we are on the brink of another war, should we not know the foe we demand with whom, when and where?"

The AFL, Hines told the committee, believed preparedness should be accomplished through more adequate physical care for the children of the country, sufficient medical service for everyone, "an efficient military intelligence system" and "eternal vigilance on the part of the State Department and the elimination of a policy of appeasement such as was followed previous to the attack made upon us by Japan."

Hines urged that congressional action on peacetime training be deferred until after demobilization of the armed forces and until the completion of treaties and international commitments "and the outcome of efforts to insure world peace."

TOBACCO WORKERS UNION WINS BIG CONCESSIONS

Durham, N. C.—Local unions of the Tobacco Workers International Union concluded negotiations for a new contract with the American Tobacco Co. Some of concessions won by the unions for 16,000 employes include:

A general increase of 6 cents per hour, clean-up, reduction of preliminary period, time and one-half for work over 8 hours, double time for holidays, 4-hour call-in pay, an 8 percent differential for night shift, workers, seniority, vacations with pay, sick and death benefits, and pay for 5 holidays.

MANY STRIKES SETTLED BY CONCILIATION SERVICE

Washington, D. C.— Conciliation Commissioners settled 62 strikes, involving 26,600 employes, during the week ending Nov. 14, Director Edgar L. Warren of the U. S. Conciliation Service of Labor, has reported. During the same period 56 new strikes, involving 16,600 employes, were assigned to conciliators and 12 of these had been settled before the week ended.

Since Nov. 1, a total of 120 strikes, involving 74,200 workers, have been settled by the conciliation service.

AFL UNION WINS TWO ELECTIONS IN RICHMOND

Richmond, Va.—The Tobacco Workers International Union won an NLRB election in Larus Brothers, Inc., by a vote of 564 to 170 for the CIO.

In another NLRB election held here the Tobacco By-Products and Chemical Corp. the Tobacco Workers International Union won over District 50, United Mine Workers, by a 101 to 5 votes.

SEABEES COMPLETING LAST ASSIGNMENT

New York City.—Men of the "Seabees," the celebrated navy construction battalions recruited almost entirely from union ranks, are now working on their "last assignment" before coming home, it was revealed by Vice Admiral Ben Moreell.

In an address to the New York Building Congress, Moreell disclosed that the final job of the Seabees is the erection of shore facilities at previously wrecked Jap naval bases to meet the needs of American ships and the "task army of occupation." Thereafter, the last of the Seabees will be demobilized, he said.

When the full history of this war is written, a major share of the credit should go to the men who enlisted in the Seabee battalions, Moreell asserted.

Executive Council Meeting Hits Pending Bills and Urges Their Defeat

Washington, D. C.—At an emergency meeting in the nation's capital, the AFL Executive Council blasted anti-labor and anti-strike bills pending before Congress and mobilized the entire resources of the American Federation of Labor to defeat them.

Summoned here by AFL President William Green because of the threatening legislative situation, the Executive Council made the following measures its chief targets:

1. The Norton Bill, making strikes illegal when certified to the President by the Secretary of Labor for consideration by fact-finding boards.

2. The Connally-Smith Act amendments, which would penalize unions for strikes by depriving them of their collective bargaining privileges for a year and making them liable to damage suits.

3. The Hobbs Bill, which would cripple efforts of the Teamsters Union to establish conditions for the protection of its members in large cities.

The Executive Council directed Mr. Green to lead an all-out labor drive against these bills. It also called upon all affiliated organizations and all members of the AFL to let their representatives in Congress know immediately that labor will consider a favorable vote for these measures a hostile act.

Mr. Green will open a sweeping campaign to defeat the Norton bill with a powerful statement to be presented to the House hearing of the House Labor Committee.

This will be followed up by personal interviews by legislative representatives of AFL unions with members of the Congress and by a slashing attack on the pending measures by the AFL's nation-wide radio program.

Hearings on the Norton bill in the House opened with a two-way labor-management onslaught on the legislation which was recommended, in the first place, by President Truman.

John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers Union, was the first witness. He declared emphatically that he will fight to the limit against the proposal because it deprives labor of its basic liberties.

For management, Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, was the first to be heard by the House Committee.

He expressed opposition to the bill because it would insure free enterprise by destroying the right to strike and because the proposed fact-finding boards would be given authority to subpoena all employer books and records.

Mr. Johnston urged Congress not to act in haste on legislation which would so deeply and seriously affect the country's economic life.

Both the Hobbs bill and the Smith-Connally amendments already are cleared for action in the House, with a vote expected before the Christmas recess. However, the Senate has not given consideration as yet to either measure. Even if the House adopts these bills, as seems likely, the Senate may refuse to concur.

AFL UNIONS SPONSORED VICTORY BOND DINNER

Los Angeles, Cal.—One of the highlights of the southern California Victory Loan campaign was a $5,000 Victory Bond per plate dinner at Ciro's, held Nov. 17. The event was sponsored by the Cooks, Waiters, Musicians and Variety Artists Unions—AFL affiliates in cooperation with American Women's Volunteer Services. Also, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Industry.

William Ring, U. S. Treasury Labor representative and one of the organizers of the event, said the Victory Loan dinner overshadowed all previous promotions in past drives. In the Seventh Loan the aquacade, biggest single event of drive, under the same sponsorship, resulted in the sale of $26 million in war bonds.

FM RADIO STATIONS COST LITTLE TO EQUIP

Washington, D. C.—Radio broadcasting need not be exclusively a big business venture, Senator Edwin C. Taylor, of the Senate Small Business Committee disclosed.

In a statement intended to encourage labor organizations and civic organizations to apply to the Federal Communications Commission for licenses to operate FM stations, Senator Taylor said that estimated cost for transmitter equipment for a small 250-watt station amount to less than $10,000. Of course, other expenses, such as real estate, studio furnishings, legal fees and sometimes tower construction must be added before a station is ready to go on the air.